DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 470 021 EA 032 033

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Schiff, Tamara W. |
| TITLE | The Teacher Advancement Program. |
| INSTITUTION | National Association of Elementary School Principals, Alexandria, VA. |
| ISSN | ISSN-0735-0023 |
| PUB DATE | 2002-00-00 |
| NOTE | 6p.; Published quarterly. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1615 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 ($2.50). Tel: 703-684-3345; Tel: 800-386-2377 (Toll Free); Web site: http://www.naesp.org. |
| PUB TYPE | Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Opinion Papers (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) |
| JOURNAL CIT | Streamlined Seminar; v21 n1 Fall 2002 |
| EDRS PRICE | EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Accountability; Administrator Effectiveness; Educational Quality; Elementary Secondary Education; *Faculty Development; Job Satisfaction; *Merit Pay |

ABSTRACT

This publication contains two essays discussing the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) and a criticism of merit pay for teachers. Today's schools are larger, often overcrowded, and frequently staffed by temporary or inexperienced teachers. TAP was created in response to the need for teacher-quality reform. It addresses challenges of teacher quality and administrator preparation by changing the structure of the teaching profession within schools. It is based on five principles: (1) multiple career paths; (2) market-driven compensation; (3) performance-based accountability; (4) ongoing and applied professional growth; and (5) expanding the supply of high-quality teachers. TAP is currently being implemented in nearly 30 schools in various states. Preliminary data show that there is an increased demand among top teachers to work in TAP schools. The second essay, "Why Merit Pay for Teachers Doesn't Work" (Al Ramirez), offers the viewpoint that such a salary schedule does not work because problems exist with regard to input, measurement, target, administration, morale, and money. It can undermine the sense of community in a school and reduce teachers' sense of efficacy by manipulating them into adopting patterns of behavior developed by others. (RT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 470 021

Streamlined SEMINAR

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

VOLUME 21, NUMBER 1

FALL 2002

# The Teacher Advancement Program

*Tamara W. Schiff*

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

W. T. GREENLEAF

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

EA 032 033

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Streamlined SEMINAR
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
VOLUME 21, NUMBER 1
FALL 2002

# The Teacher Advancement Program

*Tamara W. Schiff*

Public schools are changing. Gone are the days when students could walk to neighborhood schools where virtually every classroom had an experienced and qualified teacher. Today's schools are larger, often overcrowded, and frequently staffed by temporary or inexperienced teachers. We are facing a teacher shortage that not only threatens the quality of instruction, but is acutely linked to a growing shortage of principals. With fewer talented teachers willing to undertake the overwhelming dual task of managing a school and serving as its instructional leader, a crisis is developing that may radically affect the principal's role.

A recent survey conducted by the Milken Family Foundation and the National Association of Secondary School Principals found that while principals place a high priority on their role as instructional leaders, they devote most of their time each week to school management, discipline, parent issues, and community relations. Clearly, we are asking more and more of them, and attracting qualified candidates necessitates that we explore new ways to improve the quality of teaching and ease the burden of the principalship.

While there are many teacher quality reform efforts underway in schools throughout the U.S., most focus on a particular aspect, such as increasing professional development opportunities for teachers. Many of these reforms are making a limited impact, but none takes the comprehensive approach being pioneered by the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). Introduced in 1999 by the Milken Family Foundation, TAP addresses the challenges of teacher quality and administrator preparation by changing the structure of the teaching profession within schools.

Based on the best practices in business as well as research-based strategies in education and the social sciences, the TAP model provides a new way for teachers and principals to interact and to participate in the concept of distributed leadership, characterized by collective responsibility and sharing of knowledge and roles (Elmore 2000).

## Five TAP Principles

TAP is based on five interconnected principles derived from best business practice.

1. ***Multiple career paths.*** TAP provides opportunities for teachers who perform at high levels and have the qualifications to move along a career continuum of as many as six levels, topped by master and mentor teachers. These expert teachers, selected through a rigorous, performance-based process, are responsible for improving the performance of other teachers through observation and coaching, for which they receive commensurate compensation.

At a TAP school in Phoenix, Arizona, one of the four master teachers recently demonstrated the positive impact of her role after observing the classroom instruction of a 20-year veteran teacher. Noticing the lack of innovative teaching methods, the master teacher made some specific suggestions that the classroom teacher agreed to incorporate into her lessons. Both were surprised and pleased by the students' greatly improved performance.

*Tamara W. Schiff is a senior research associate for the Milken Family Foundation in Santa Monica, California. Her e-mail address is* **tschiff@mff.org**.

EA 032 033

**2. *Market-driven compensation*** allows schools to compensate teachers differently, based on their position and performance. For example, principals are encouraged to offer additional compensation to attract qualified teachers for subjects and schools that are hard to staff, such as math and science.

TAP's theoretical model freezes existing salary schedules, creates ranges for salaries based on position, and determines annual salary increases based on performance. In practice, however, most TAP schools follow district policy in salary increases for teachers while augmenting the salaries of master and mentor teachers. Each school also establishes a pool to pay for bonuses to individual teachers, based on their performance.

In an Arizona district where four of the seven schools are implementing TAP, several teachers have been motivated to transfer to the more challenging teaching environment of the district's poorer schools by the TAP compensation system that rewards their talent and expertise.

**3. *Performance-based accountability.*** Under TAP's standards-based evaluation system, teacher performance is scored at five levels against very clear performance standards. Part of each teacher's evaluation includes year-to-year classroom and school achievement gains. The TAP system rewards teachers for their teaching skills, additional responsibilities, and their students' learning. Because teachers are well trained in the rubrics associated with the TAP performance standards, there are no surprises when observations take place. In addition, the teachers have time to study the evaluation system prior to its implementation, so that they know what is expected and are able to incorporate desired skills into their teaching.

Although TAP's system shares evaluation responsibility between the principal and the master and mentor teachers, principals appreciate the support they receive in the evaluation process, and teachers appreciate having more than a single evaluator.

**4. *Ongoing and applied professional growth.*** TAP establishes a structure where master and mentor teachers conduct classroom demonstration lessons, give regular feedback on specific teaching and learning practices, and design weekly, site-based professional development to meet their fellow teachers' needs.

This leads to extra support for beginning teachers in particular. Where most first-year teachers might count only on occasional brief classroom visits by the principal or an article on classroom management left in their box by a veteran teacher, under TAP new teachers meet in weekly clusters to discuss current instructional techniques and issues. Teachers also benefit from frequent observations by principals, master teachers, and mentor teachers, who provide consistent, immediate feedback and suggest areas of improvement.

**5. *Expanding the supply of high-quality teachers.*** TAP encourages schools to advertise for positions outside of their district and/or state. TAP also supports the elimination of unnecessary barriers by advocating policies that make teaching certification attainable in four years in all states, provide alternative certification options, and allow capable retired teachers to continue working part-time. TAP also supports national certification, multi-state credentialing, and transferable pension benefits.

The results of these efforts have already been seen in some TAP schools. In South Carolina, one principal reported that her school—a Title I, inner-city school where the majority of students qualified for free or reduced-price lunch—had historically struggled to attract "the best and brightest" teachers because of the emotional and physical demands of its student population. The implementation of TAP changed this. Not only have veteran teachers reported feeling "rejuvenated" and "inspired," but when the school interviewed for a master teacher position, it received applications from a university professor, a retired principal, and a number of talented teachers from other schools.

## Implementing TAP

The Teacher Advancement Program is currently being implemented in nearly 30 schools in Arizona, South Carolina, Arkansas, Indiana, and Colorado. Four other states—Florida, Louisiana, Ohio, and Nevada—are developing plans to implement TAP in schools next year. Because it is both a "bottom-up" and "top-down" reform model, TAP requires school, district, and state buy-in. The Milken Family Foundation, which developed TAP, works directly with individuals and groups at all of these levels to ensure adequate implementation, including training for principals, master teachers, and mentor teachers, and guidance for professional development.

Although it is too early to assess the long-term impact of TAP, we know from preliminary data that there is an increased demand among top teachers to work in TAP schools, and that there is an increase in satisfaction among teachers at those schools. As TAP becomes more fully implemented, the role of principals will change. With the assistance of master teachers, principals will be better able to manage their multiple leadership demands. And by attracting and retaining a high-quality teaching force, they will be able to reap the benefits of higher achievement by their students. □

### Reference

Elmore, Richard F. *Building a New Structure for School Leadership.* New York: Albert Shanker Institute, 2000.

### For More Information

To learn more about the Teacher Advancement Program, visit the Milken Family Foundation.
**www.mff.org/tap/**

# Why Merit Pay for Teachers Doesn't Work

*Al Ramirez*

The uniform salary schedule for teachers is a ubiquitous fixture of American public education. Developed in an effort to professionalize public education, it proved popular because it was deemed fair, easy to understand, and predictable. However, critics now argue that this system promotes mediocrity by rewarding poor performance while failing to recognize outstanding achievement. They propose merit pay as one way of rectifying this imbalance. They argue that many other professions succeed with merit pay systems—from lawyers and professional athletes to aluminum siding salespeople—so why not public school teachers?

But these advocates deny the complex realities of schooling. And it is these realities that cause most merit pay initiatives to fail.

It is important to distinguish merit pay from other reimbursement systems that are sometimes passed off as merit pay. Among these is the *career ladder*, in which educators are rewarded for acquiring more training, demonstrating competencies in key skills, and assuming greater job responsibilities. *Pay-for-performance* models provide additional compensation for taking on additional duties, such as mentoring new teachers. A third method is to offer a *differentiated salary schedule* based on hard-to-fill teaching assignments in shortage areas or difficult schools. Merit pay, by contrast, ties salary to student learning, usually measured by tests.

So why do merit pay systems fail? There are a number of reasons.

***Input problems.*** A major concern raised by teachers asked to take merit pay is that they have no control over students assigned to their classes. In other professions, practitioners can choose or limit their clientele or otherwise define the range of possible outcomes in advance. But every veteran teacher knows that groups of students will vary in ability and motivation from year to year, with uneven and unpredictable results in terms of achievement and test scores.

***Measurement problems.*** In order to achieve fairness in merit pay, policymakers attempt to adopt objective measures of student learning—usually tests. But this approach can lead to a narrowed curriculum, teaching to the test, and blaming failure on students and their families.

***Target problems.*** Policymakers need to be very careful about what they choose to reward in a merit pay system. Teaching is a complex profession and teachers do many things in the interest of students that cannot be measured well and are not considered as merit pay incentives.

***Administration problems.*** In order to overcome the problems of using only a single test, accommodating the complex nature of the classroom, and selecting the "right" employee behaviors to reward, policymakers establish an array of outcomes. The result is that both teachers and principals spend too much time simply administering the merit program.

***Morale problems.*** Merit pay tends to be demoralizing because it imposes external motivators on teachers who see themselves as professionals.

***Money problems.*** Unlike other professions, where merit awards can be tied to revenue, public education functions within constrained budgets. Merit programs lack the funding to provide or sustain substantial financial rewards.

Finally, merit pay misses the boat because it fails to recognize the fundamental principles of human motivation and how they apply in a school setting. One of the strongest incentives that exists in schools is the sense of community. By introducing competition, merit pay destroys this feeling. A second natural motivator for teachers is the feeling of accomplishment when they meet a professional challenge, such as teaching a child with learning disabilities to read. This sense of efficacy is diminished when they find themselves manipulated into adopting patterns of behavior developed by others.

Most teachers chose their profession out of a sense of calling, with the understanding that they would never get rich. A long time ago, policymakers in public education understood this. The deal they made with teachers was that, in turn for their commitment to teaching in the public schools, they would be treated as professionals and appropriately paid, with the promise of additional compensation as they grew in their profession. That's the way it should be.

Teachers don't sell aluminum siding, so why should we treat them as if they do? □

*Al Ramirez is a professor of education at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.*
*His e-mail address is* **aramirez@uccs.edu**.

## Web Resources

Georgia is one of several states that have implemented state-wide pay-for-performance plans.
**www.doe.k12.ga.us/budget/pfp.asp**

The Consortium for Policy Research in Education has an ongoing project researching teacher compensation. See case studies of new compensation structures or find out what's going on in your state or district.
**www.wcer.wisc.edu/cpre/tcomp**

The Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland provides an example of a school system in which master teachers work with other teachers to improve their performance.
**www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/dsd/ct.html**

*Education Week* reports on the controversy surrounding merit pay in "Cincinnati Teachers Rebuff Performance Pay" (May 29, 2002).
**www.edweek.org/search**

*Streamlined Seminar* (ISSN 0735-0023) is published four times during the school year by the National Association of Elementary School Principals. Rebecca J. Kesner, editor. Candice Johnson, production editor. Single copies: $2.50; bulk orders (10 or more): $2.00 ea. Virginia residents add 4.5% sales tax. Specify date and title of issue when ordering. Checks payable to NAESP must accompany order. Send to National Principals Resource Center, NAESP, 1615 Duke Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-3483.


# BrainSMART: 60 Strategies for Boosting Test Scores

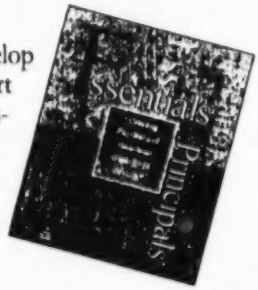
**by Marcus Conyers and Donna Wilson**

This book helps you increase test scores and reduce stress while building a love of learning. Fifty years of cognitive and student achievement research are integrated with breakthroughs in neuroscience and the authors' work with educators and students. *BrainSMART* provides: six M.A.S.T.E.R. keys to boosting test scores; five parts of the BrainSMART learning model; 10 key facts about the brain and what to do about them; and a system of 60 classroom-tested strategies that are easy to learn and apply.

**Item # BSS-SS0902**
$39.00 members/$45.00 non-members
Please add $4.50 for shipping and handling.

# Creating Physical and Emotional Security in Schools

**by NAESP and Educational Research Service**




This guide, the seventh publication in the *Essentials for Principals* series, helps school leaders to develop and nurture school communities that support students' emotional health and safety, and to support higher levels of student learning. By developing and using a proactive, schoolwide approach to discipline that is understood by all staff and students, and which is consistently applied, schools can go far towards decreasing the level of inappropriate behavior. Today's principals also need to develop plans for ensuring the safety of students and for reacting to crises. This means attention must be given to the physical environment, to communication, and to coordination with agencies outside the school.

**Item # ECPES-SS0902**
$19.95 members/$24.95 non-members
Please add $4.50 for shipping and handling.

Order from the NAESP National Principals Resource Center by phone, 800-386-2377; by fax, 800-396-2377; or online at www.naesp.org to receive a 10 percent discount. You may also send a check or purchase order to: **National Principals Resource Center**, 1615 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314-3483.




BEST COPY AVAILABLE

**U.S. Department of Education**
*Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)*
*National Library of Education (NLE)*
*Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)*

# NOTICE

## Reproduction Basis

[X] This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

[ ] This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").